

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 03423 152229Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 INR-07
CIAE-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 L-03 MMO-01 ACDA-07 SSO-00
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SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO JCS WASHDC IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY
USMISSION NATO PRIORITY
USNMR SHAPE
USDELMC
USCINCEUR
CINCUSNAVEUR
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES
DIRNSA

S E C R E T ATHENS 3423

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (FOR E.O., TAGS AND SUBJ. LINE OMITTED)

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, PFOR, GR, US
SUBJECT: US-GREEK DEFENSE COOPERATION DISCUSSIONS - WORKING

REFS: (A) STATE 77245 (DTG 070037Z APR 77)
(B) STATE 79933 (DTG 090001Z APR 77)
(C) STATE 78591 (DTG 080030Z APR 77)
(D) STATE 216951 (DTG 012023Z SEP 76)
(E) ATHENS 10922 (DTG 120525Z OCT 76)

1. SUMMARY: SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS AT THE WORKING
LEVEL BEGAN APRIL 15 ON AN ENCOURAGING NOTE WHEN THE
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PAGE 02 ATHENS 03423 152229Z

GREEKS EXHIBITED SOME FLEXIBILITY IN RESPONSE TO OUR
TACTICS DESIGNED TO TRADE OFF WITHDRAWAL OF U.S.
INSISTENCE FOR A GENERAL ACCESS PROVISION IN RETURN FOR
HIGHER PERSONNEL LEVELS AT HELLENIKON AND HIGHER SORTIE
LEVELS AT SOUDA. AT THE SAME TIME, THE GREEKS EVIDENCED
THEIR CHRONIC PROPENSITY FOR HAGGLING IN AN EFFORT TO AVOID
GIVING UP ANY MORE THAN THE MINIMUM THE U.S. MIGHT BE

WILLING TO ACCEPT. END SUMMARY.

2. GENERAL ACCESS (REF A). GREEKS CHARACTERIZED U.S. WILLINGNESS WITHDRAW ALL REFERENCE TO GENERAL ACCESS IN THE DCA, ITS APPENDICES, OR A SEPARATE EXCHANGE AS A REASSURING AND FORTHCOMING CONCESSION WHICH WOULD INFLUENCE THEM TO ADJUST THEIR POSITIONS ON HELLENIKON PERSONNEL LEVELS AND SOUDA SORTIE LEVELS MORE IN FAVOR OF THE U.S. THEY CONCLUDED THAT THE AGREEMENT'S SILENCE IN THAT RESPECT WOULD PRESERVE THEIR CLEARANCE RIGHTS AND THAT THEY WOULD ON THAT BASIS TRY TO NEUTRALIZE ANY POSSIBLE PRESSURE FROM WITHIN THE GOG TO MAKE REFERENCE TO "DIPLOMATIC CLEARANCE" TO REINFORCE THAT PRINCIPLE OF SOVEREIGNTY. OUR COLLATERAL REQUEST TO SET A DATE TO CONSIDER DEVELOPMENT OF A TECHNICAL ARRANGEMENT COVERING AIRCRAFT CLEARANCE PROCEDURES, OUTSIDE THE CONTEXT OF DCA NEGOTIATIONS, WAS ALSO ACCEPTED AD REFERENDUM. FURTHERMORE, THEY RAFFIRMED THEIR INTENTION TO BE FLEXIBLE IN THE APPLICATION OF SUCH ACTUAL CLEARANCE PROCEDURES.

3. HELLENIKON (REF B). GREEKS STATED THEY WERE CONFIDENT THAT THEY COULD ACCEPT A U.S. PERSONNEL LEVEL OF 1,250 WITHOUT FURTHER DISCUSSION. HOWEVER, AFTER ADMITTING THAT TIME AND EVENTS HAD CHANGED THE ISSUE FROM ONE OF SUBSTANCE TO ONE OF OPTICS, THEY AGREED TO CONSIDER SERIOUSLY THE U.S. SCHEME TO APPLY A PERCENTAGE FLUCTUATION TO WHATEVER ACTUAL NUMBER IS ENTERED IN THE HELLENIKON BPNEK IN ORDER TO PROVIDE THE U.S. WITH THE ABILITY TO MAINTAIN THE U.S. PERSONNEL LEVEL AT 1,452. THE U.S. SIDE AGREED WITH A TENTATIVE GREEK OPINION THAT SUCH A FLUCTUATION PROVISION COULD BE SPECIFIED IN A SUPPLEMENTARY SECRET

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PAGE 03 ATHENS 03423 152229Z

CLASSIFIED DOCUMENT RATHER THAN THE ANNEX ITSELF. (THEY FLATLY REFUSED TO RECONSIDER THE CONCEPT OF PERSONNEL RE-LOCATION OFF-BASE.) GREEKS ADDED THAT FINAL AGREEMENT ON THE PERSONNEL LEVEL WOULD BE CONTINGENT ON THE OFF-BASE RELOCATION OF "SOME" DEPENDENT SUPPORT ACTIVITIES NOW AT HELLENIKON.

4. SOUDA (REFS C AND D). GREEKS AGAIN DESCRIBED THE SOUDA SORTIE ISSUE AS ONE OF SUBSTANCE RELATED TO AIR TRAFFIC SATURATION AT THE AIRFIELD. WHILE STATING THAT THEY ARE NOW WILLING TO AUTHORIZE HELICOPTER SORTIES (BUT NOT HOURS) IN ADDITION TO THE 219 AGREED FOR FIXED-WING AIRCRAFT, THEY CHALLENGED THE STATED REQUIREMENT FOR 120 PER QUARTER IN THE STRONGEST TERMS, POINTING TO THE FACT THAT USN COMBINED FIXED-WING AND HELICOPTER SORTIES HAVE NOT DPCEDED 220 PER QUARTER SINCE JUNE 1976. AFDTER UNSUCCESSFULLY TRYING TO ELICIT A FALLBACK HELICOPTER SORTIE NUMBER BELOW 120 FROM THE U.S. SIDE, THE GREEKS DANGLED THE NUMBER 80 AS SOMETHING THEY MIGHT BE ABLE TO SELL TO THE GOG (READ HELLENIC AIR FORCE).

5. DESPITE PRIOR AGREEMENT TO DEFER THE QUESTION OF COST SHARING UNTIL AFTER OPERATIONAL QUESTIONS WERE RESOLVED, THE GREEKS INSISTED ON A CONCEPTUAL DISCUSSION IN WHICH THEY FLATLY RELATED THEIR FLEXIBILITY ON SORTIE LEVELS TO THE DEGREE OF OUR ACCEPTANCE OF THEIR MODIFICATION OF THE 1959 SOUDA COST SHARING ARRANGEMENT (REF E). THEY ASKED THE "HYPOTHETICAL" QUESTION: "IF WE ACCEPT 120 HELICOPTER SORTIES, WILL YOU ACCEPT OUR COST SHARING PROPOSAL?" LACKING DEFINITIVE WASHINGTON INSTRUCTIONS, WE HEDGED THE QUESTION BY RESTATING OUR REQUIREMENT FOR 120 HELICOPTER SORTIES AND REITERATING OUR WILLINGNESS TO ENTER INTO A FAIR AND EQUITABLE COST SHARING ARRANGEMENT.

6. GREEKS SAID THEY WOULD ATTEMPT TO RESPOND MORE FORMALLY TO THE GENERAL ACCESS AND HELLENIKON PERSONNEL LEVEL ISSUES ON APRIL 18, AND TO THE SOUDA SORTIE MATTER A FEW DAYS LATER.
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PAGE 04 ATHENS 03423 152229Z

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